

**QUESTIONS FOR MICHIGAN TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY  
BOARD OF CONTROL**

1. What goals would you like to achieve during your time on the board?
2. Over the last 15 or 20 years it seems that all state universities have been expanding programs to try to offer everything to everyone. Do you think this is a good idea?
3. Governor Granholm recently proposed giving additional funds from the federal economic stimulus package to universities and community colleges that hold the line on tuition. Do you support this proposal?
4. Under what circumstances would you vote to increase tuition at your school?
5. Do you think your university has done a good job of controlling costs? Where would you find additional cost savings?
6. If Michigan Technological University is facing a budget deficit, what areas would you look to first to make cuts? Please list several areas where the University has already made cuts or become more efficient?
7. What type of outcomes should the university measure to determine if it is being successful? Does your university currently do anything like this?
8. What do you think about basing future state appropriations for universities on some kind of past performance outcome measurement?
9. What is your position on the importance of state universities as authorizers of charter public schools?
10. In which areas of technological research does your university specialize? How effective is your school at commercializing this research to help grow the state's economy?
11. Do you think that K-12 institutions are doing a good job of preparing students for college? Why?
12. What is the relationship that your school maintains with its surrounding community?

## Questions for Appointees to the Michigan Technological University Board of Control

Paul Ollila – April 9, 2009

1. What goals would you like to achieve during your time on the board?

To make certain that Michigan Technological University continues to grow their enrollment while maintaining the high quality of their degree offerings as well as the extraordinary job placement rate exceeding 95%.

It will also be critically important to ascertain that Michigan Tech follows their strategic plan which will lead to being an even higher ranked public university.

2. Over the last 15 or 20 years it seems that all state universities have been expanding programs to try to offer everything to everyone. Do you think this is a good idea?

It is critically important that universities focus on their core strengths and any expansion of programs should be consistent with the mission of the university. Michigan Technological University is Michigan's technological university and is nationally and globally recognized as an exceptional institution dedicated to the educating of high quality graduates in the STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) related fields.

3. Governor Granholm recently proposed giving additional funds from the federal economic stimulus package to universities and community colleges that hold the line on tuition. Do you support this proposal?

Yes

4. Under what circumstances would you vote to increase tuition at your school?

I would ensure that as many cost cutting methods and outside sources of revenue were utilized before passing on increased costs to the students.

5. Do you think your university has done a good job of controlling costs? Where would you find additional cost savings?

Over the last five years, Michigan Technological University has implemented significant cost savings programs while still maintaining high quality educational programs, and graduates still continue to enjoy a job placement rate of 97%. Based upon my current knowledge, it is difficult to determine where there could be any additional cost cutting that would not injure vital programs. However, if confirmed as a member of the Board of Control, I will continue to push for every, and all, possible cost savings.

6. If Michigan Technological University is facing a budget deficit, what areas would you look to first to make cuts? Please list several areas where the University has already made cuts or become more efficient?

During periods of budget challenges one must look everywhere for potential reductions as well as revenue enhancements. Unfortunately, it is too early for me to address the first question with any significant specificity since I do not yet have the requisite knowledge at this time.

In terms of cost cutting and greater efficiencies, Michigan Tech has been very aggressive because of their commitment to providing a high quality education while maintaining the lowest possible tuition and the maximum accessibility for Michigan residents. As you may know, Michigan Tech offers the highest percentage of traditionally high cost programs (science, technology, engineering and math) of any public university in Michigan.

Among the major actions which have been taken:

- Restructured the university to achieve greater administrative efficiencies.
- Adopted Lean techniques which improve the efficiency of operations and business processes.
- Adopted the Academic Quality Improvement Program, a continuous improvement program for our accreditation.
- Implemented new health care program which is projected to save \$500,000 in the second half of this fiscal year, and additional amounts in succeeding years.
- Continuing to increase research.

7. What type of outcomes should the university measure to determine if it is being successful? Does your university currently do anything like this?

I believe it is important to measure the types of outcomes undertaken by Michigan Tech such as job placement and retention rates. If confirmed, I would strongly urge that we assess as many quantitative and qualitative outcome factors as possible.

8. What do you think about basing future state appropriations for universities on some kind of past performance outcome measurement?

As indicated in the previous answers, I believe various performance outcome measures are important and would be useful for appropriators. Clearly, the value of the graduates to employers as reflected by job placement rates is important. Also, proactive recognition by legislators and the executive branch relative to what they perceive is needed in terms of the types of graduate degrees for the economic vitality of the state.

Such data could be effectively utilized for incentivizing university programs that would educate students in those areas.

9. What is your position on the importance of state universities as authorizers of charter public schools?

Depending upon the geographic location of the university and their various areas of expertise they could be effective authorizers of the charter public schools. However, it is always important that authorizers must also be responsible for ascertaining the quality of charter schools as they impact the public good and the students being educated.

10. In which areas of technological research does your university specialize? How effective is your school at commercializing this research to help grow the state's economy?

While there is much for me to learn about the incredible basic and applied research that is conducted at Michigan Tech, I do know that relative to moving research to commercialization places Michigan Tech among the top 10% of research universities. A tiny tip of the iceberg describing areas of specialization ranges from engineering (civil, environmental, electrical, mechanical, geological) to computer science, physics, bio-medical, forestry and cognitive learning.

The following excerpt from testimony before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Higher Education by Michigan Tech's President describes the economic role played by the university in the local community.

"Michigan Technological University's sponsored program activities impact the local economy in several ways including salaries and wages to employees, acquisition of goods and services and sales of licensed technologies by local companies. These activities add approximately \$35,000,000 to the local economy and create approximately 1,100 jobs in the community. This includes approximately \$3-4,000 per year in sales by local companies licensing university technologies.

Over the next five years we expect to more than double the amount of new jobs created as a result of research at the university and within the community as a result of new companies being created and the expansion of the existing ones. The Michigan Tech Enterprise SmartZone is a classic example. Working with the Michigan Tech SmartZone, we have significantly increased the number of co-oping opportunities for our students and have also assisted in the development of more full-time jobs. For example, in the last year General Electric Aerospace has employed four full time individuals and more than 50 co-op students with plans to continue to increase. Ford Motor also has a presence of two full-time employees and some 15 Michigan Tech co-op students and plans on further expansion as well.

Michigan Tech is participating in three Centers of Energy Excellence, partnering with private industry and the state to support development of the alternative energy in Michigan and the development associated jobs. In the largest of these, we are also working with Michigan State to support the

development of Mascoma's cellulosic ethanol plant in the eastern Upper Peninsula.

Clearly, Michigan's economic future is tied to the ability of Michigan Tech and the other universities to produce an educated workforce and, just importantly, produce research breakthroughs that will generate new products and new businesses."

11. Do you think that K-12 institutions are doing a good job of preparing students for college? Why?

With some 40 years of K-12 experience as a teacher and administrator, I believe there have been, and are, many positive results in preparing students for higher education. Yet, I would also say K-12 could do a better job and for a variety of reasons that would require many pages to discuss. Some is resource related, both amounts and allocations. Others would include priorities in terms of programs, effectively reaching out to needs of all students, and instilling enthusiasm for acquiring advanced knowledge and skills.

12. What is the relationship that your school maintains with its surrounding community?

As a longtime resident and educator in the Copper Country area, I believe that Michigan Tech has worked hard to develop excellent "Town Gown Relations". Probably even more importantly, Michigan Tech has been exceptional in directly participating (and leading) economic development locally and statewide. There are some 1,100 good paying jobs that are directly related to the research activities at Michigan Tech which are performed by undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty often combined with the private sector.

As many of you know, Michigan Tech is Michigan's fourth research university and is widely recognized even though it has no medical school. Yet, it does cutting edge research that leads to new medical related discoveries because of their extraordinary strengths in engineering, science and technology research.